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(*b*) the value of the trees so cut during that year; and

(*c*) the number of trees so cut and removed outside Malabar district?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM: (*a*) No, Sir.

(*b*) & (*c*) Does not arise.

* 79 *Q.*—SRI K. KUNHI MOHAMED SHAFEE: Will the Hon. the Minister for Agriculture be pleased to state the estimated total number of teak and rosewood trees to be cut from the Reserved Forests in Malabar and removed to places in Coimbatore district under the recent orders of the Government and the approximate total value of the same?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM: The Government have not issued any orders for the felling of teak and rosewood trees in the Reserved Forests in Malabar district and their removal to Coimbatore district.

SRI K. KUNHI MOHAMED SHAFEE: Sir, question No. 78 is about the orders issued in the year 1955–56. On the other hand, question No. 79, is about the recent circular issued by the Chief Conservator of Forests to the Forest officers of the Coimbatore Division. May I know from the Hon. Minister whether he has enquired into the allegations, which were published in the newspapers of Malabar as also some of the Madras newspapers? The then Minister in charge of Forests is stated to have given a statement to the papers to the effect that he had called for reports from the concerned forest divisions. May I know whether the Hon. Minister has anything to say on these facts?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM: Sir, may I with your permission, read question No. 79 put by the hon. Member: " Will the Hon. the Minister for Agriculture be pleased to state the estimated total number of teak and rosewood trees to be cut from the Reserve Forests in Malabar and removed to places in Coimbatore district under the recent orders of the Government and the approximate total value of the same?". I have given the answer that the Government have not issued any orders. I am not fully aware of what all has appeared in the press in Malabar or anywhere else. I have given the information that the Government have not issued any orders and no trees have been cut.

SRI K. P. GOPALAN: Sir, may I know whether the Government have issued any circular to the Departmental officers not to cut trees in Malabar and if so, what is the reason for such a circular?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM: Sir, in 1954 the Government discussed with the Chief Conservator of Forests about the methods to be adopted in the matter of rotation that has to be observed for thinning teakwood trees, which is a technical

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process. The Government considered the suggestion and agreed with the Chief Conservator in 1954 that if there was to be a rotation of thinning once in 28 to 30 years, the revenue will be increased by 15 per cent. In accordance with the decision taken in 1954, the Department proceeded to take action for cutting the trees, which were found to be fit for thinning and they called for tenders. Immediately there was an agitation in the press that the Government were taking wrong steps. There were even petty charges against the Government and in view of these suspicions—although they were absolutely baseless—the Government instructed the officers not to proceed with the cutting.

SRI M. NARAYANA KURUP : Sir, though the Government say that there was no actual cutting, is it a fact that a very large number of trees in Malabar Reserve Forests or Malabar forests were marked for cutting and if the decision to cut the trees beyond thirty years was taken in 1954, may I know why the Government did not issue orders up till now? Were they waiting for the trees to get 30 years old?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM : Yes, Sir, the Government did not even now issue any orders. The trees were marked with a view to arrange for calling for tenders. I may add that this procedure applied not only to the Malabar areas but also to the non-Malabar areas of the Madras State.

SRI K. C. GOPALAN UNNI : Sir, is it not a fact that about 978 trees about six feet in girth were marked in Thonikkadavu range on the Malabar side after January of this year and that about 90 trees were cut and only then orders were passed to stop the cutting of the trees? I had been to that place and I was told that orders had been received not to cut the trees further after the 90 trees had already been cut.

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM : Sir, I do not have detailed information with me. Perhaps the hon. Member is correct.

SRI K. KUNHI MOHAMED SHAFEE : Sir, in Thonikkadavu reserve forests and the Tekkadi forest area of the Coimbatore Division, there was a large scale felling of trees. That was the allegation made in the press. Though these areas belong to the Coimbatore Division for administrative purposes, they belong to the Malabar district. When complaints and allegations were made in papers, it was said that an order was issued by the Government to the forest officers for stopping the felling. There was also allegation to the effect that trees below 2 feet girth at the breast-height were also felled and removed to the Coimbatore district side. May I know whether the hon. Minister has any information about the number of trees felled in these areas and the estimated value of the trees so felled?

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THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM : I do not have information about the exact number of trees that were cut and the value of those trees. The trees that are cut are removed to the nearest timber depot for sale. The hon. Member is perhaps aware that the timber depot for the sale of trees cut in the Thonikadavu forest, which is in the Coimbatore Division, is at Pollachi. The hon. Member is perhaps also aware that there are timber depots in the Mysore State also to which the cut trees are removed for the purpose of sale. 9-50 a.m.

SRI P. RAMAMURTHI : Once the policy is settled by the Government that for the purpose of thinning the forests, trees should be cut at the end of thirty or forty years, whatever the period may be, do the departmental officers proceed to allot trees for cutting on their own initiative or do they obtain the prior sanction or approval of the Government?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM : No prior sanction of the Government is necessary. Automatically the departmental officers proceed year by year according to the policies that are settled by the Government.

SRI M. PALANIYANDI : மலையாளிகள் பிரிந்துபோகும் சமயத்தில் இம்மாதிரி விஷமப் பிரசாரங்களை சில தினத்தாள்கள் செய்கின்றன. மலையாளத்திலிருந்து எந்தா சில பொருள்களை தமிழ்நாட்டுக்குக் கொண்டு போய்விட்டதாகவும், திரும்பவும் திருப்பியனுப்பிவிட்டதாகவும், இன்னும் இம்மாதிரியான செய்திகள் சில தினத்தாளில் வருவதைக் கண்டு மலையாள அங்கத்தினர்கள் கேள்விகள் கேட்கிறார்கள். இதனால் தமிழ்நாட்டு மக்களும் மலையாளிகளின்பேரில் கொதிப்படைந்து வருகிறார்கள். ஆகவே, விஷமப் பிரசாரம் செய்துவரும் பத்திரிகைகளின்மீது சர்க்கார் நடவடிக்கை எடுக்குமா ?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM : இதுபற்றியெல்லாம் கனம் அங்கத்தினரைப் போன்றவர்கள்தான் கவனித்துக்கொள்ள வேண்டும்.

SRI R. KRISHNASWAMI NAIDU : ஜூலை மாதம் 30-ந் தேதி யன்று நான் நீலகிரி ஜில்லாவிலுள்ள கூடலூருக்குச் சென்றிருந்தபோது அங்குள்ளவர்கள், கூடலூர் பகுதியிலுள்ள சர்க்கார் காடுகளிலிருந்து பெருவாரியான ஜாதி மரங்களை மலபார் ஜில்லாவுக்கு இரவு பகலாக லாரிகளின் மூலமாக எடுத்துக்கொண்டு போவதாக சொன்னார்கள். ஒன்றிரண்டு மலையாளிகளும்கூட அது வாஸ்தவம் என்று சொன்னார்கள். சர்க்கார் உத்திரவின்படிதான் அப்படிச் செய்யப்படுகிறதா அல்லது வேறு விதமாகச் செய்யப்படுகிறதா என்பதை சர்க்கார் கவனிப்பார்களா ?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM : போகின்ற இடங்களில் யாரோ பராபரியாக சொல்வதையெல்லாம் பெரிதாக எடுத்துக் கொண்டு, அதுவும் இந்தச்சமயத்தில் கேள்வி போடுவது அவ்வளவு சரியல்ல என்று தாழ்மையுடன் கனம் அங்கத்தினருக்குத் தெரிவித்துக் கொள்கின்றேன்.

SRI K. KUNHI MOHAMED SHAFEE : Considering the apprehensions and suspicions created in the mind of the general public, will the Government conduct an enquiry into the matter and make the position clear by issuing a statement?

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THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM : I do not think any enquiry will remove this kind of suspicion. Perhaps the only remedy is separation, which will come about on 1st November and not on 1st October.

SRI M. NARAYANA KURUP : For how many centuries were the Government following the practice of cutting trees after they reached 17 years and what was the particular expert evidence that was available to the Government to change their policy in 1954?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM : I do not have with me the history of the Forest Department for centuries. I say there was a discussion and on the basis of expert opinion the Government took a decision in 1954. It is of course open to the hon. Member after the Kerala State is formed to get the opinion of his own experts, reverse that policy and pursue his own policy.

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM : This decision was arrived at in view of the policy which the Travancore-Cochin Government are pursuing. They are adopting a rotation of 17 to 18 years. As a matter of fact, the Chief Conservator of Forests put forward the proposal that we should adopt what was prevailing in the Travancore-Cochin State, that is, the 17 or 18 year rotation. After considering all aspects and after consulting experts, we thought that 17 or 18 year rotation would not be good. That was why 30 year rotation was fixed. On that basis it was calculated that we would have an increase of revenue by 15 per cent. We have taken into account the experience of the Travancore-Cochin particularly in this matter.

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM : I may also add that according to the opinion of the Chief Conservator of Forests expressed in 1954, 17 to 18 year rotation would even double the income. But we have not accepted that.

SRI S. C. C. ANTHONY PILLAI : In view of the fact that professedly non-communal parties are putting questions which are likely to increase the existing communal tension, will the hon. Members who are putting questions at least make specific allegations with regard to the constituencies which they represent?

SRI M. CHADAYAN : പത്രറിപ്പോർട്ടുകളേയും ഗവൺമെൻറിൻെറ പ്രസ്നോട്ടിനേയും അടിസ്ഥാനപ്പെടുത്തി എം. പി. സി. സി. പ്രസിഡെണ്ടു് തുടങ്ങി ഉത്തരവാദിത്വമുള്ള ആളുകൾ സ്ഥലത്തുപോയി അന്വേഷണം നടത്തിയശേഷം ആനകളെ കടത്തിക്കൊണ്ടുപോവുകവും മരം മുറിച്ചു കടത്തുകയും മററും ചെയ്തിട്ടുള്ളതു് വാസ്തവമാണെന്നു് ഒരു പ്രസ്താവന പുറപ്പെടുവിച്ചിട്ടുള്ളതു് ഗവൺമെൻറിൻെറ ശ്രദ്ധയിൽപ്പെട്ടിട്ടുണ്ടോ ? ഉണ്ടെങ്കിൽ ഇതിനെ സംബന്ധിച്ചു് തമിഴ്നാട്ടിലേയും മലബാറിലേയും എം. എൽ. എ. മാരടങ്ങിയ ഒരു കമ്മിററിയെ നിയമിച്ചു അന്വേഷണം നടത്താൻ ഗവൺമെണ്ടു് മുന്നോട്ടു വരുമോ ?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM : பொறுப்புள்ள தனவான்களெல்லாம் இம்மாதிரி ஆதாரமற்ற புகார்கள் சொல்லுகிறார்கள் என்பதுதான் மிகுந்த ஆச்சரியமளிக்கிறது.